THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) 157.

(b) and (c) Every endeavour is made to reply to the Hon'ble Member of Parliament as promptly as possible according to prescribed guidelines.

Number of stock exchanges in the country

2936. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) how many Stock Exchanges are operating in the country at present and how many of them were opened after 1984;

(b) what is the total number of companies which have resorted to market borrowing for raising capital since 1984, year-wise; and

(c) what was the amount raised through the Stock Exchanges since 1984, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) There were thirteen recognised Stock Exchanges at the end of 1984. Five more Stock Exchanges have been granted recognition since then. The total number of recognised Stock Exchanges at present is eighteen.

(b) and (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Introduction of 'Agricultural Credit Card Scheme' by banks

2937. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have introduced 'Agricultural Credit Card Scheme' for the benefit of the framers through various banking institutions;

(b) if so, what are the details of the Banks, Statewise which have so far introduced the Scheme and what are the conditions to be fulfilled by a farmer for the membership under the said Scheme; and

(c) what are the benefits of the scheme under operation, Statewise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Yes, Sir. The public sector banks were advised by Government in April, 1988 to consider launching of credit card scheme for farmers on the lines of a scheme introduced by Dena Bank.

(b) As per information available, Agricultural Credit Card Scheme has been introduced by Syndicate Bank, Canara Bank, Punjab National Bank, Andhra Bank, Bank of Maharashtra, Allahabad Bank, Corporation Bank, UCO Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, Vijaya Bank, Central Bank of India and United Bank of India besides Dena Bank, on an experimental basis in selected areas. Only borrowers who are prompt in repayment are eligible to be covered under the scheme.

(c) The credit card would provide following facilities:

(i) It will enable a card holder to secure production credit instantly.

(ii) It will dispense with procedural formalities such as making applications, furnishing land records certificates and documentation for every agricultural season.

(iii) It will also dispense with the necessity of the farmer carrying cash for purchase of seeds, fertilisers; etc.

News-items captioned 'Liberal Credit for Housing Sector'

2938. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the news-item which appeared in the Financial Express of 3rd November, 1988 under the heading 'Liberal Credit for Housing Sector' and state: